



Water Quality NewsFlash

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Science at the State Board – Recommendations – The State Water Resources Control Board commissioned a consultant to evaluate the use of science within the State and Regional Boards: *Role of Science and Engineering in Decision-Making Within the State and Regional Water Boards*. The first set of suggestions in the report focus on creating a means or mechanism to enable the Regional Boards to obtain scientific advice from technical experts not readily accessible today. For example, “blue ribbon” science panels could provide advice and guidance on complex scientific issues. (Currently, a blue ribbon panel is assessing the viability of numeric effluent limits for storm water runoff.). The report recommends that “it would be very helpful to have formal policy that would authorize the Boards to require dischargers to fund escrow accounts to contract with independent scientists.” Interesting recommendations related to stormwater include:

- Best management practices (BMPs) and treatment measures designed to address unreasonable or unlikely storm events are not cost-effective. More monitoring and modeling work is needed to optimize “design” storms used in developing best management practices (BMPs) and other treatment measures used in TMDL implementation plans. *This recommendation was made in the context of updating bacteria objectives to protect the “recreational water contact” beneficial use.*
- State-of-the-art science continues to demonstrate the importance of wetlands in removing pollutants from stormwater and protecting downstream water quality and beneficial uses. More research and monitoring are needed to develop numerical chemical and biological water quality standards for these waters.
- The State Water Board’s Sources of Drinking Water Policy should be revised to: ... (b) provide an opportunity for the Regional Boards to take categorical actions to de-designate waters currently designated for MUN (municipal and domestic supply) beneficial uses in accordance with the revised policy without having to undertake multiple Use Attainability Analyses (UAAs). [UAAs are very difficult to complete successfully due to technical and procedural requirements.]
- The State should promote the coordination of monitoring activities and comparability of data among other agencies and monitoring entities. [Caltrans submitted comments to this effect during the recent hearing on the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).]

The report is posted: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/general/publications/docs/sciencereport.pdf>

Industrial Activities – Comment period extended for EPA general permit – NewsFlash 05-50 described the U.S. EPA’s proposed NPDES Stormwater Multi-Sector General Permit for Industrial Activities (MSGP). This permit is not generally applicable in California but is important because the State references it and uses the regulatory approaches developed by EPA in the State-issued general permits. The comment period on the EPA proposed permit has been extended until February 16. Permit posted: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/msgp.cfm>

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>